

October 23, 2002

To: Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, Chairman  
Supervisor Gloria Molina  
Supervisor Yvonne Brathwaite Burke  
Supervisor Don Knabe  
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: Marcia Mayeda  
Director

Subject: Animal business rating system

In response to the Board motion of September 24 directing our Department to report on the steps necessary to create a letter-grade rating system for animal businesses such as private pet kennels and pet shops in our service area, we offer this report:

1. A draft rating system, based on the successful model pioneered by the Department of Health Services, has been created. That system grades animal related businesses using several criteria, including housing facilities, food and water availability, medical condition of the animals, sanitation, safety and security for the animals, consumer protection and required information postings. The steps necessary to implement this system include:
  - a. Obtaining comments and suggestions from kennel operators and others familiar with animal business operations. This is targeted to be completed by February 2003.
  - b. Pilot the inspection program during the spring of 2003 and refine the program as necessary.
  - c. Conduct an educational outreach program to business to inform them of the new rating system during the summer of 2003, in anticipation of our next inspection cycle.
  - d. Roll out the program during our annual inspection period of November – January, beginning in November 2003.
  - e. Conduct an educational outreach program to the public upon completion of the annual inspections so they may be aware of the new standards being used to inspect animal facilities, and how to report complaints. This educational component will include links on the Department's website and a 24-hour telephone number where the public can call in to request information on the rating system.

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2. Appropriate inspection fee schedules are under discussion with representatives from the Auditor-Controller's office. Those fees will likely be based on the amount of time needed for our officers to conduct their inspections. New fees will require Board approval, as they will amend Los Angeles County Code, Title 10, which governs animal keeping.
3. Discussions are underway between representatives from our agency and the Treasurer-Tax Collector's office about how to enforce the ban on the sale of live animals at swap meets in our service area.

If you have any questions about this matter please contact me at (562) 940-8871.

c: David E. Janssen, Chief Administrative Officer  
Violet Varona-Lukens, Executive Officer